

Historic, Archive Document

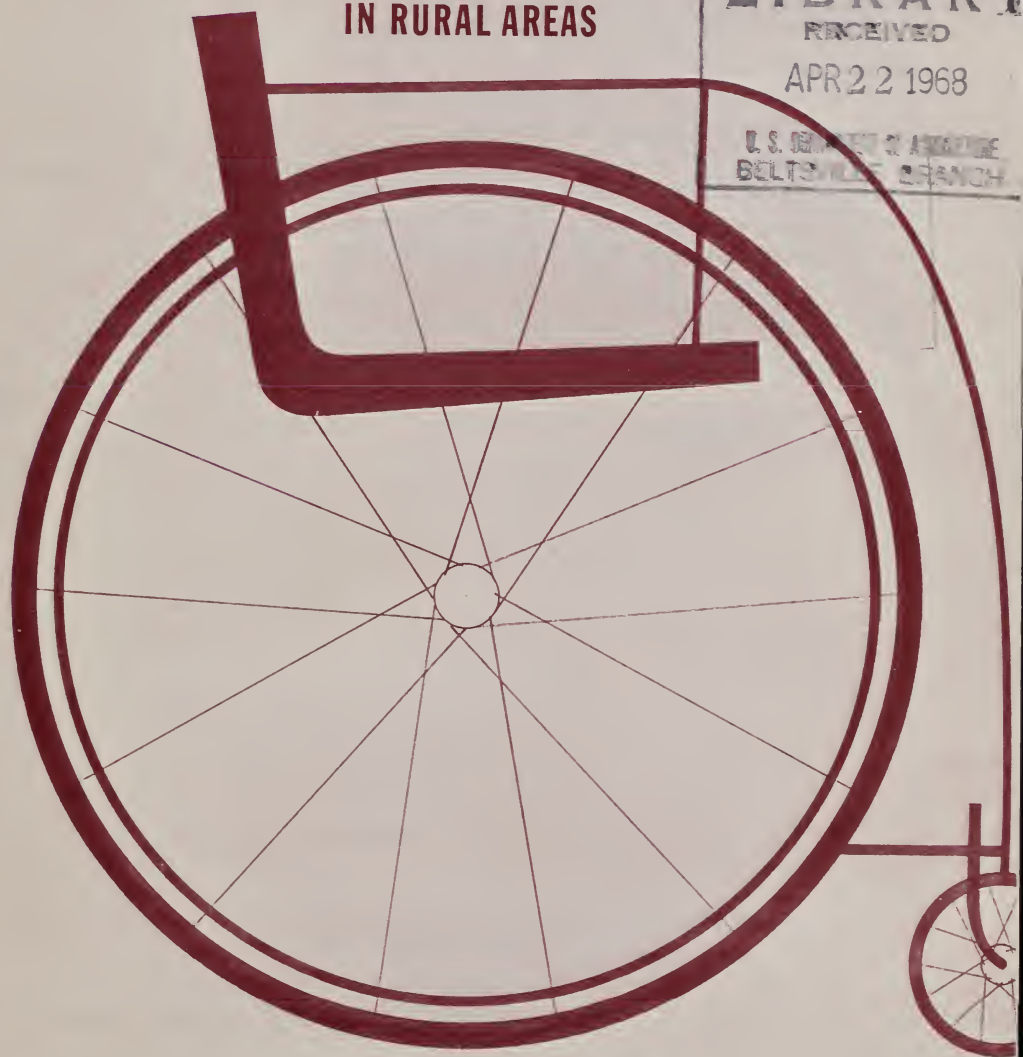
Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

Ag 84 Rec D 860
#860



HELPING THE HANDICAPPED IN RURAL AREAS

LIBRARY
RECEIVED
APR 22 1968
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BELTSVILLE BRANCH



FOREWORD

In every community there are handicapped citizens capable of useful work and a normal life. Our challenge is to help them learn about—and use—the many public programs designed to assist them. The Department of Agriculture and the Cooperative Extension services of our State land-grant universities are in a unique position to do this in rural areas.

The President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped emphasizes rehabilitation and jobs for the handicapped in rural America. The Department's part of this program is aimed at locating the handicapped living in the country, defining their disabilities, arranging for rehabilitation and training, and locating jobs to fit their skills in business, industry, and farming.

Improving the lot of handicapped people is an important goal in the advancement of our Nation, both morally imperative and economically sound. We are proud to lend a hand in this great effort.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Orville L. Freeman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Orville" and last name "Freeman" clearly legible.

Orville L. Freeman
Secretary of Agriculture

CONTENTS

Helping the Handicapped	1
Sources of Assistance	2
Rehabilitation is the key	3
<i>Who is eligible?</i>	4
<i>Services available</i>	4
What You Can Do	6
<i>Attitudes</i>	6
<i>As a professional worker or community leader</i> . .	7
<i>Suggestions for community projects</i>	7
Who are the Handicapped?	9
The Statistics of Rehabilitation	11



HELPING THE HANDICAPPED IN RURAL AREAS

E. J. Niederfrank, Rural Sociologist, Federal Extension Service

An estimated 22.2 million Americans are limited in some degree by chronic health conditions.

Among these handicapped men and women, we can find every conceivable skill and talent, often being wasted for lack of rehabilitation, training, and job placement. Many have knowledge and experience that can and should be utilized to benefit themselves and their families and to make them self-supporting, contributing members of society.

Many of these handicapped people live in rural areas, towns, and small cities where information about rehabilitation programs and job opportunities is less available than in urban centers. The relative lack of medical services in rural areas also contributes to disability.

Vocational rehabilitation has made it possible for many such handicapped people to be successfully employed.

The FIRST step is to put them in touch with the agencies that can help them in rehabilitation. You can help do this as an individual or through an organization.



SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE

Many agencies, public and private, assist handicapped people. Sources of information and help include:

- Local welfare and Social Security offices
- County health officer, department, or unit
- County Extension Service
- Local and State offices of the State Employment Service
- State department of health or welfare
- State department of education
- The State vocational rehabilitation agency, which may be in the State departments of health, welfare, or education, or may be a separate agency
- The Veterans Administration regional office or nearest hospital facility
- Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped
- Local chapters of health organizations.

Any of the local offices listed will be able to help you contact the State agencies for vocational rehabilitation and employment.

In addition, the handicapped person may want to talk to a local adviser—a clergyman, a school principal, a physical education instructor, or another handicapped person who is successfully employed.



REHABILITATION IS THE KEY

One of the great social advances of the last half century is the idea of **REHABILITATING** people who are physically or mentally handicapped in some way that prevents them from working and living normally. Many handicaps can be removed; others can be reduced so that they do not interfere with work. Records of thousands of physically and mentally handicapped persons prove this.

Work records also show that many handicapped people on the job

- have lower accident rates,
- are more punctual,
- are more dependable,
- are more enthusiastically dedicated to their jobs,
- stay on the job longer,
- are more cooperative with others, and
- have greater loyalty to their company or employer than non-handicapped workers.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "to restore to one's former capacity, calling or profession; to refit one for making his livelihood." It also means developing the potential capacity of those handicapped who have not yet been employed.

The **VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM** is a service to help eligible handicapped men and women develop and use the abilities they have left to earn income and enjoy life as normally as possible. The Rehabilitation Services Administration and the Bureau of Employment Security in Washington, D.C., support State rehabilitation agencies and em-



ployment services, which work directly with the handicapped.

Who is Eligible?

How does a disabled man or woman qualify for the program? In general, the requirements are as follows:

1. The applicant must have a disability which prevents him from earning a living, prevents him from getting a job more suited to him, or threatens his continued employment.

2. The applicant must, in the judgment of the rehabilitation agency, have a reasonable chance of being able to work in suitable employment after services are provided.

Services Available

Several kinds of help are open to the handicapped person. The services he receives depend upon his needs and abilities. First, he is given a medical examination to learn what his physical abilities are. Then, he is interviewed and tested to learn his work skills and his interests. There is no charge for these tests.

The facts from the medical examination and the interviews and tests are studied. Then the handicapped person and his counselor make a plan to help him build up his skills and abilities so that he can work and make good on a job. All of the information obtained from or about a person is kept confidential.

A number of services may be needed in the plan. The following are available through Vocational Rehabilitation and the Employment Service:

1. DETERMINATION OF THE EXTENT AND NATURE OF THE DISABILITY. Doctors and other medical people do everything they can to make the handicapped person strong enough and well enough to work. This may include an operation or some special treatment.

2. PHYSICAL AIDS SUCH AS BRACES, TRUSSES, ARTIFICIAL LIMBS, AND HEARING DEVICES.

3. COUNSELING TO HELP THE HANDICAPPED MAN OR WOMAN PICK OUT THE



RIGHT KIND OF WORK AND GET READY FOR THAT KIND OF JOB.

4. **TRAINING FOR THE RIGHT JOB.** This may be given on the job, in a trade school, or in many places. Some people are trained at home. Vocational Rehabilitation generally pays for training, or training may be provided under the Manpower Development and Training Acts or other programs.

5. **BOARD, ROOM, AND TRAVEL DURING REHABILITATION.**

6. **JOB PLACEMENT.**

7. **TOOLS AND LICENSES.** If a handicapped person needs tools or a work license, Vocational Rehabilitation will help him get what he needs. Sometimes it helps a handicapped person start a small business.

8. **HELP AFTER EMPLOYMENT.**

Some people will need all of these services. Some will need only one or two of them. Counselors in the agencies will help each handicapped person get what he needs.

Many of those aided are young people who were handicapped at birth or in childhood and have never worked before. Others may be people who have been handicapped for years and haven't had adequate, suitable employment for a long time. In still other cases, rehabilitation is a matter of retraining and counseling a recently handicapped person.

People who work with the handicapped say, "It is not the **DISABILITY**, but the **ABILITY** that counts." When a handicapped person's best abilities have been discovered and his disability has been properly treated, there are many kinds of work that he can do as well as anybody else.

Almost any position can be filled by a handicapped person if his handicap does not interfere with the specific requirements of that job. A job requiring good hearing, for example, would not be suitable for a partially deaf person, but might be well filled by someone with good hearing and crippled foot or arm.

Thus, matching personal abilities and work requirements is a major part of successful employment of the handicapped.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

No matter what your professional or community role, your efforts and those of your organization can contribute to the personal development of handicapped people and thereby to the better economy and spirit of your community.

Attitudes

You can help the handicapped in your community through your own positive attitude.

In the past, it was not uncommon for the handicapped person to have to face a negative attitude from people in his community. Crippled, disabled, blind, or deaf people were frequently looked upon as weaklings or freaks. Some people felt such a condition was inflicted as punishment.

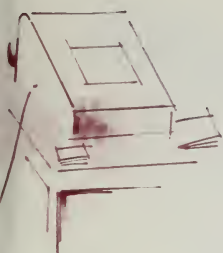
Today handicaps are recognized for what they are—the result of accident, disease, illness, or birth defects.

The handicapped person must be helped to realize that his condition is not something to be ashamed of and that help is available.

His family must treat him as a member of the family who needs and wants self-respect and normal treatment as far as practical, not pity.

The community attitude should be one of normalcy, helpfulness, and most of all, full acceptance.

Programs of community education, therapy, and vocational rehabilitation now treat the handicapped as acceptable and useful members of society. The President's Committee on



Employment of the Handicapped is a leader in this educational effort.

As a Professional Worker or Local Leader You Can:

1. Become aware of handicapped people in your county or community, especially those who might be helped. Identify cases.
2. Find out what programs public and private agencies have available now. Especially learn about the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service programs of your State.
3. Encourage handicapped people to seek the advice and assistance of local and State agencies.
4. Recognize people who are successfully rehabilitated and employed. Boost community acceptance of handicapped people.
5. Promote the rehabilitation and employment of handicapped people as you work with local farmers, agricultural industries, community leaders, organizations, and news media.
6. Involve handicapped people in activities and place them in leadership positions in your programs.

Suggestions for Community Projects

1. Launch a campaign to educate the public through radio, TV, newspapers, and talks. A youth group or other organization might spearhead such a project.
2. Form a committee to lead a coordinated community-wide program, including such things as identifying handicapped people, getting them into rehabilitation programs, and promoting their employment.



3. Canvass local employers and develop an inventory of jobs open to people with various handicaps.

4. Work with the rehabilitation agency or institution to help rehabilitated people successfully return to their families and communities.

5. Have ramps built, doors widened, and other architectural barriers removed to help crippled people enter public buildings more easily.

6. Help encourage the handicapped to participate in local fairs, seasonal festivities, recreation programs, camps, and the like.

7. Develop adult education, and suitable craft and activity programs for the handicapped.

8. Develop a transportation service to help handicapped people get to and from community activities.

9. Involve the handicapped in community projects.

10. Take a census of handicapped people in the community and keep the roster up to date.

11. Sponsor a writing or speaking contest on "Handicapped People—A Community Asset."

12. Develop a demonstration or exhibit on rehabilitation and employment of the handicapped for use at meetings, fairs, and other gatherings.

13. Promote safety and accident prevention to reduce the number of people being handicapped.



14. Develop emergency services to get stricken people to medical attention before it is too late.

Handicapped people are a valuable part of our population; we can help them become truly a part of the community—for their benefit and for the benefit of society.

WHO ARE THE HANDICAPPED?

Lewis N. was a busy dairy farmer. Early one foggy morning while driving his pickup truck, he dodged another car and hit a bridge abutment. Thrown out, he suffered back injuries and lay in a hospital unconscious for 30 days, completely paralyzed. Then he gradually began to recover speech and movement. After 6 months of rehabilitation services, though still somewhat limited, he was back home driving the truck around the fields and managing the farm.

Gene T., a farmer, was suddenly jerked into the whirling beater of a manure spreader. One leg had to be amputated. Five months later, with an artificial leg, Gene threw away his crutches. Over 40 years of age—old to start over again—he contacted the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency and was sent to a technical institute to learn a trade. Today he is a machinist-toolmaker working in a nearby town. Still living on the home farm, he looks after a few cattle and does custom painting on the side—a busy and happy man.

More examples emphasize the point. **Dan S.** is in charge of the toolroom of a large chem-

ical plant. He has to keep track of 3,500 stock items, reordering when supplies run low. He doesn't make mistakes. "Can't afford to," he says. The only thing is that Dan is blind.

Patsy M. is an order clerk at a rubber products company. She processes more than 1,000 orders each month and has set a new record for accuracy. Patsy M. has cerebral palsy. It has affected her speech, her walking and her left hand, but she still is able to do a good job as order clerk.

The garden shop of a large department store is packed with customers, but with smiling efficiency, **Robert P.** easily waits on them. "What a pleasant young man," customers have been heard to say. But it happens that Robert is mentally retarded.

The composing room of a major city newspaper is a noisy, bustling place. Nine quick-fingered men operate the equipment, unaffected by the noise, and another man in his 40's sits there, black copy pencil in hand, absorbed in editing and reprinting copy. All ten are totally deaf.

A young "Star Farmer" in FFA, **Bob. C.** lost one arm in a baler accident three years ago, but helps his father operate a 900-acre farm, now plans to attend agricultural college.

These people have made good because of determination, vocational rehabilitation services, and cooperative employers. They are earning good incomes, paying taxes, and supporting their families with dignity and self-respect.

These are only a few among the people called handicapped. How many people in your community have a health handicap that prevents them from normal work or home life? Too often we don't realize how many there are who can be helped.





THE STATISTICS OF REHABILITATION

Of the 22.2 million Americans who are limited in some degree by chronic conditions, about 16 million are limited in a major activity. Among these 16 million, an estimated 3.7 million have substantial work handicaps and could benefit from vocational rehabilitation services.

Local employment offices placed nearly 300,000 handicapped workers in 1966, well above the figure for 1960. A record 173,000 handicapped people were rehabilitated during the fiscal year 1967 under the State-Federal program of vocational rehabilitation. A new Veterans Administration program to rehabilitate disabled peacetime veterans recently went into effect, and 13,000 applications were received during its first year. The Federal Government hired 13,000 handicapped men and women in 1966, a new record.

For every 100,000 new jobs, at least \$500 million a year is added to America's gross national income. The tax load for public welfare services is reduced and more people are enabled to live happily with independence and dignity.

It's not the
disability,
but the
ability
that counts!

April 1968

Federal Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture; Social and Rehabilitation Service, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; and Bureau of Employment Security, U.S. Department of Labor; in cooperation with the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped.

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402 - Price 10 cents